

**North Carolina Early Childhood Outcomes
NC Department of Public Instruction
Office of Early Learning
Part B SPP/APR Indicator #7**

Frequently Asked Questions

Who will coordinate the data collection system at the LEA level?

The Exceptional Children's Director is responsible for assigning this responsibility. Typically, the preschool coordinator will serve a coordination role.

Why is OSEP interested in only three outcome areas and not in the five developmental domains?

The three outcome areas in Part B Indicator 7 were chosen based on stakeholder input and recommendations by the Early Childhood Outcome Center. Many stakeholders expressed concern that using an approach that separates children's development into discrete domains is not consistent with the integrated nature of how young children develop and goes against integrated and transdisciplinary intervention models. Additionally, since the emphasis in working with young children with disabilities is on developing functional skills, these outcomes incorporate and integrate developmental domains.

Who will train staff at the LEA?

The Exceptional Children Director at each LEA should assign this responsibility.

On-line Child Outcome Summary Form (COSF) training is available at the following URL:

<http://www.earlylearning.nc.gov/PreKindergarten/PreschoolEC/cosfTrainingINDEX.asp>

Additional training materials can also be found on-line at the website for the Early Childhood Outcomes Center. The URL for state specific training materials is:

http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~eco/pages/states_cosf_materials.cfm

A CD containing COSF training materials has been distributed to each LEA. Additional CDs are free (one CD per LEA) and can be obtained by contacting: Norman Allard, Ph.D., 6356 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-6356. Tel.#: (919) 807-3691 or email: norman.allard@dpi.nc.gov

COSF training and updates are also offered as part of the New Preschool Coordinator's Orientation, regional meetings and webinars for Preschool Coordinators and the annual state Exceptional Children Conference. Dates for these events will be announced on the Preschool Coordinators' listserv (i.e., ncpen@listserv.unc.edu).

Training at the local level should involve all people who will be completing the Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF) which is completed at entry and exit on all preschool children (ages 3 to pre-kindergarten 5) with an IEP.

Who will complete the Child Outcomes Summary Form?

The COSF should be completed by the person(s) who know(s) the child best, using information from all required sources. This person will vary from program to program and from child to child. It is encouraged that all individuals in close contact with the child and the parents give input prior to completing the form. If the child receives services in an LEA preschool program, this would typically be the child's teacher. The preschool coordinator may also want to help determine the rating. For children who are served itinerantly in community programs, the itinerant teacher or therapist may be the most appropriate person with input from the child's community program teacher and the parent. The decision about who should complete the COSF needs to be thought out carefully by each LEA.

When do we complete the COSF?

The requirement is to complete the COSF "at or near entry" into the 619 preschool program. In all cases, it must be completed within 60 calendar days of entry. A final COSF must be completed "at or near exit" for children who have been in the program for at least six months. Children who are age eligible for kindergarten, but are spending an extra year in preschool will have their exit COSF completed prior to the start of their additional preschool year. This will provide age comparative data about how the child functioned on each of the three outcomes when he/she entered the preschool program and when he/she left or should have exited the preschool program. In order to capture the most child progress, LEAs should consider assessing children as close to entry and exit as possible. For children who are expected to be in the program for more than a year, you may want to update the COSF annually (i.e., complete an interim COSF at the end of the first preschool year). This is a local option.

Can we complete the COSF at the initial IEP meeting?

Yes; however, some programs that participated in Phase I did not recommend this because there are too many other requirements at the IEP meeting and they often do not have enough information about the child at that time to complete a COSF. Many of the Phase I programs did obtain parental input about how their child functions in each of the three outcome areas at the IEP meeting.

How should we involve the family?

You may choose to use a standardized assessment such as the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scale or gather this information through more informal conversations with a family member at intake, at the IEP meeting or at some other natural point of contact. Parents do not have to help determine a child's score on the COSF, but their input must be considered. It is important to know how the child functions at home and in the

community. We recommend that you inform parents that this is a *program* requirement. This information is used for federal accountability for the Part B/619 program; therefore, families cannot refuse to have their child's COSF scores included in the aggregate. (See sample letter on the COSF training materials CD.)

Do we complete the COSF on ALL children?

Complete entry COSFs on all preschool children with IEPs; however, if the child is initially placed less than six calendar months before transitioning out of the preschool program, the COSF does not need to be completed. Complete exit COSFs on all children who have entry scores and were served by the 619 preschool program six months or longer.

How will this information be reported?

LEAs will report COSF child outcome data to DPI in the CECAS system that has been modified to include fields with the child's date of entry to the 619 preschool program, the COSF entry scores, the date of the child's exit from the preschool program and the COSF exit scores. Additionally, there are fields in CECAS to report what data sources were used. LEAs that do not use the CECAS system report their COSF data to DPI on an Excel spreadsheet provided by CECAS staff.

North Carolina and other states will report statewide percentages to OSEP in the State Performance Plan (SPP) February 2013. Clarification for reporting to the public will be forthcoming.

What data sources should be used to determine the child's rating?

See document, Assessment and Measurement Practices for Indicator 7, on the COSF training materials CD.

Can we use data from the Part C Infant/Toddler program?

Yes, if the Part C data sources are "current and relevant."

Can IEP goal attainment be used to determine the child outcome areas?

Achieving IEP goals means very different things depending on the child's disability, severity, etc. OSEP is interested in data collected in all three areas regardless of the area a child is receiving services. IEP goals would not necessarily provide data on all three areas. Finally, OSEP requires comparing children's functioning to same-aged peers, something IEP goal attainment data may not provide. IEP goal attainment can be one data source when completing the exit COSF.

Can we alter the IEP form to include child outcomes ratings?

No.

Must we rate children in all three outcome areas on the COSF even when it is not an area of concern?

Yes.

How are we supposed to get the data on age-expected behaviors?

There are several ways you can determine what is age-expected, including using established age expectations developed for curriculum based assessments, or the use of norm-referenced assessment tools. Sample crosswalks and developmental charts can be found on the COSF training materials CD. An age referencing document can also be found at the following URL:

<http://www.earlylearning.nc.gov/PreKindergarten/PreschoolEC/pdf/AgeExpectationDevelopmentalMilestonesbyAgeGroupxOutcome.pdf>

Can we alter the COSF form?

You may customize and personalize the form; however, the seven point COSF scale and the definitions of each point on the scale must not be changed. You may choose to remove the numbers from your form, but the integrity of the scale needs to remain intact. The COSF was developed as a common metric to produce comparable data for accountability purposes.

Where should we keep the COSF forms?

The COSF is part of the child's exceptional children's confidential record and should be accessible to program monitors.

What if a child moves to another school system/within North Carolina/out of state?

The COSF, as part of the child's exceptional children's confidential record, will follow the child to his or her new program. The new school system within North Carolina takes responsibility for completing the COSF at or near exit. If a child moves out of state and has received IEP services in North Carolina for at least 6 months, an exit COSF must be completed by the North Carolina LEA.

What if a preschool child with an IEP moves into North Carolina from out of state?

An entry level COSF must be completed.

How do we keep track of the data?

A component has been added to CECAS to collect and report on the required COSF data elements. For those LEAs that do not use CECAS, we recommend that you use the COSF Excel spreadsheet provided by CECAS.